
NEWS From:

Congressman Mike Honda

FIFTEENTH DISTRICT - CALIFORNIA



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Reps. Honda & Boehlert Introduce Sweeping Nanotechnology Legislation With Broad Bi-Partisan Support

WASHINGTON, Feb. 14, 2003 — Representatives Mike Honda (D – San Jose), a member of the House Science Committee, and Science Committee Chairman Sherwood Boehlert (R-NY) last night introduced legislation (H.R. 766) that would authorize a national nanotechnology research initiative. Nanotechnology is the top inter-agency priority in the Bush Administration's fiscal 2004 proposed budget for non-medical, civilian scientific and technological research and development; there is significant momentum and optimism for enacting this legislation this year.

H.R. 766, the Nanotechnology Research and Development Act of 2003, authorizes \$2.1 billion over three years for nanotechnology research and development programs at the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy, the Department of Commerce, NASA, and the Environmental Protection Agency. The bill provides a formal structure for coordination of research across the agencies, emphasizes interdisciplinary research, addresses societal concerns raised by nanotechnology, and requires outside reviews of the program.

“This \$2.1 billion investment for nanotechnology research and development will go a long way in developing a new economic engine for this country,” said Rep. Honda. “Nanotechnology will have a dramatic impact on society, and it is critical that the U.S. has structures in place that allow us to assess and understand technical issues, as well as the social, ethical, philosophical, and legal issues that will arise. I am proud to be working with Rep. Boehlert on this legislation. Our bi-partisan effort is a testament of the strong support for nanotechnology in Congress.”

“Nanotechnology may be the ‘smallest’ field of science - the manipulating of individual atoms. But I’ve come to understand that in science and technology, few things could actually be ‘bigger’ than nanotechnology - in terms of its potential to revolutionize scientific and engineering research, improve human health and bolster our economy,” said Chairman Boehlert. “This bill will ensure that the federal government is investing significantly, and most importantly wisely, in this growing field.”

The legislation would help ensure a steady stream of federal R&D dollars in an area critical to Silicon Valley’s high tech future.

Last year, the Silicon Valley area was named the top “Place To Watch” in the race to become the nation's economic center of nanotechnology and microsystems technology by *Small Times* magazine, the leading publication in the field. The technology base in Silicon Valley has already led to the formation of several formal and informal networks and think tanks dedicated to nanotechnology, which will enhance the development of the field in the region. A few examples are The Northern California Nanotechnology Initiative, The NanoScience Exchange, The Foresight Institute, and The NanoBusiness Alliance.

Additionally, there are a number of research institutions in the Bay Area that provide facilities, expertise, ideas, and current and former students well suited to contribute to the nanotechnology industry: Stanford University Nanofabrication Facility; Stanford Integrated Circuits Lab; UC Berkeley Microfabrication Lab; UC Berkeley Sensor and Actuator Center; San Jose State University Center for Electronic Materials and Devices; the Institute for Bioengineering, Biotechnology, and Quantitative Biomedical Research (UCSF, UC Berkeley, UC Santa Cruz); the Center for Information Technology Research in the Interest of Society (UC Berkeley, UC Davis, UC Merced, UC Santa Cruz); Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory; Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory; and NASA Ames Research Center.